wolves, but many carry them curled over their backs. They appear to consist of spaniel, terrier, Newfoundland and hound, in various degrees of mixture, and are of all colours except pure white or brindled.

"A most tremendous epizootic has visited us, as you have perhaps seen by the papers. From 10,000 to 12,000 head of bullocks have fallen victims to it, and not three per cent. of those attacked have escaped, nor have any preventive or curative measures whatever been found. It seems to be a kind of catarrhal fever, and is generally fatal in three or four days. Its ravages were fearfully rapid, herds of 200 or 300 being entirely finished in a single week. This calamity is the more sorely felt from its occurring just at the beginning of crop, which is remarkably heavy this year."

EHRENBERG'S RESEARCHES ON INFUSORIA.

M. von Humboldt, in a letter to M. Valenciennes (Potsdam, December 16), gives an account of M. Ehrenberg's observations on the Infusoria contained in the sea-water brought by Captain Ross from various latitudes, and in the atmospheric dust sent to him by Mr. Darwin (Annals, vol. xiv. p. 169). He adds, "M. Ehrenberg has also found that the calcareous Bryozoa, of which $\frac{8}{9}$ths of the chalk is composed, descend below the Jura formation, in the United States as far as the mountain limestone; but the species which occur in these formations are different from those of the chalk. You also know that notwithstanding the age of the chalk, half of the calcareous Bryozoa of this formation still live in the Baltic or in the ocean.

"The pumice-stone contained in the *trass* of the Rhine (of volcanic origin) is filled with siliceous Infusoria. It is to be supposed that the little animals inhabited the pumice-stone fallen into some fresh-water lake, and that these fragments were afterwards enveloped in a muddy ejection. As pumice-stone is formed from obsidian, and as volcanoes are a reaction of that which is in the innermost part of our planet against its outer crust, we cannot admit the pre-existence of the siliceous Polygastrica in craters. We must begin by collecting facts, hypotheses will come afterwards."—*Comptes Rendus*, Dec. 23, 1844.

Occurrence of the Anoplotherium *in the lowest layers of the tertiary period of the Paris Basin.* By M. E. Robert.

Amongst the numerous bones of the Lophiodon, crocodile, tortoise, &c. associated with the stems of *Yuccaceæ*, which I have collected at different intervals in the central and upper layers of the *calcaire grossier* of Nanterre and of Passy, I have hitherto only been able to separate a jaw-bone of *Anoplotherium leporinum*; the rarity of such a fossil might lead us to suppose that the Lophiodons are almost the only ones which are to be met with much lower than their congeners, the Anoplotheriums and Palæotheriums, in the tertiary layers; however, beneath the calcaire grossier and in the midst of the plastic

clay, the workmen have laid bare at Montalets (commune of Meudon) a left thigh-bone, which, from its characters, appears to me to belong to the most common of the species of *Anoplotherium* described by Cuvier; it differs but a very little from it by being a little longer in the bone, and will range under the varieties mentioned by that illustrious palæontologist. The proportions compared to those of the commonest species are :—

	Commonest species (Cuvier).	Meudon species.
Length between the head and the inner condylus...	0,36	0,40
Breadth between the head and the great trochanter	0,12	0,118
Breadth from one condylus to the other	0,10	0,085
Great diameter of the head.....	0,047	0,053
Diameter of the bone at its mean part	0,053	0,053

This bone, the largest and best-preserved perhaps which has been found in the inferior layers of our tertiary system, is of a dark brown externally as well as throughout its compact substance; but the spongy tissue is incrusted with iron pyrites ornamented with the richest colours; the tissue is moreover penetrated with very small crystals of sulphate of lime, which mineral incrusted all the bone with lenticular crystals, even disputing the place with some impressions of carbonized plants. It will perhaps also be interesting to learn, that in the neighbourhood of its site and a little above it, in the midst of a grayish clay abounding in seeds of *Chara* transformed into hydrate of iron, a large number of nodules of amber were gathered, as pure and transparent, but more fragile than that found on the coasts of the Baltic.—*Comptes Rendus*, Dec. 23, 1844.

Description of a new species of Australian Bird. By J. Gould.

Podiceps Australis. *P. quoad colorem*, P. cristato *consimilis, at cristâ collari in medio latiùs et saturatiùs castaneâ, et ad apicem latiùs nigrâ.*

Crown of the head and occipital tufts black; frill black at the outer edge and chestnut in the centre, gradually passing into buffy white on the face; upper surface and wings dark brown; scapularies and secondaries pure white; all the under surface silvery white, stained with brown and chestnut on the flanks; irides red; bill dark horn-colour; upper surface of the tarsi and toes dark olive-green; under surface pale yellow.

Total length, 24 inches; bill, $2\frac{3}{4}$; wing, $7\frac{1}{2}$; tarsi, $2\frac{1}{4}$.

Hab. Australia and Van Diemen's Land.

Remark.—Nearly allied to *P. cristatus*, but differs in being somewhat larger in size, and in having the frill fuller and of a blacker hue than in that species.—*Proc. Zool. Soc.* August 13, 1844.

Bibliographical Notice.

We are informed that Mr. King is preparing for publication a portion of his Lectures on Geology. The subjects treated of may be gathered from the following headings :—

A popular view of the production of coal from vegetable matter.